

## The Janice Davis Gordon Memorial Postdoctoral Fellowship in Colorectal Cancer Prevention Research

Last Rev. 1/10/2025

# Application Instructions

## Program Overview

The [Cancer Prevention Research Training Program \(CP RTP\)](#) at [The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center](#) prepares scientists and clinicians for leadership roles as cancer prevention and control research investigators, focusing on interdisciplinary collaboration and career development. This program seeks trainees from diverse fields, including biomedical sciences, epidemiology, genetics, and social sciences, equipping them with robust training in quantitative methods, cancer prevention education, and career development activities. Trainees engage in mentored research, seminars, and professional development and publish in peer-reviewed journals, gaining experience in a cross-disciplinary environment to accelerate their transition to principal investigator roles.

This fellowship is funded by a donor endowment to MD Anderson Cancer Center by the **Janice Davis Gordon Memorial Postdoctoral Fellowship in Colorectal Cancer Prevention Research**.

## Eligibility

- Applicants must have already earned a doctoral degree (e.g., M.D., Ph.D., DrPH, PharmD) **OR** must be within 5 months of earning a doctoral degree **from the application deadline date**.
- Applicants may be from any disciplinary background relevant to cancer prevention and control, early detection, and risk assessment.
- This fellowship has no citizenship requirement and is open to national and international candidates, including to U.S. Citizens, Permanent Residents, and Visa holders.

## Funding Support & Benefits

- Postdoctoral fellowships are funded for two (2) years and paid at **\$53,760 annually**.
- Fringe benefits include health insurance, paid institutional holidays, paid vacation, and sick leave.
- **This fellowship award does not provide research support funds for travel, lab supplies, books, or other research items.** Applicants must consult the MD Anderson primary mentor for an allowance of these expenses.

## Fellowship Requirements

Fellowship recipients are required to participate in career development activities, as outlined in the **fellowship requirement memo**. Successful applicants will receive additional details during the CP RTP orientation after the start of the fellowship.

# APPLICATION OVERVIEW

The application process has **two (2) phases**. The Advisory Committee and other faculty subject matter experts will review the documents. To apply, follow steps 1 through 4 in the next section.

## 1. Phase One (required for all applicants):

**1a)** The *SLATE Application* includes the inquiry form, resume/CV, statement of research experience and interest (i.e., personal statement), copies of impactful manuscripts, a minimum of two (2) letters of recommendation, and a copy of the doctoral degree (certified translation if not in English) OR (for doctoral students) proof of enrollment in a doctoral degree program and a letter from the doctoral committee chairperson/advisor stating the anticipated date of degree completion and confirming that the doctoral student is in good standing.

**1b)** The *Supplemental Application*, including the coversheet checklist, letters of support from all confirmed mentors, bio-sketches and other support from confirmed mentors, and other documents outlined in these instructions and coversheet checklist.

## 2. Phase Two (by invitation only):

*Research and Career Proposal:* After the [review committee](#) evaluates the application, the CPRTP Program Manager will notify all candidates of the application decision and invite the awardee to complete a [Research and Career Proposal](#) and include instructions and deadline.

# Step 1: IDENTIFY & SECURE MENTOR COMMITMENT

## Mentor Criteria

1. Fellows must work with **at least two (2) mentors** with complementary research expertise.
2. The primary mentor must have a faculty appointment at the **Assistant Professor level or higher** at MD Anderson.
3. **At least one mentor** must be from the [UT MD Anderson Cancer Center, Division of Cancer Prevention and Population Sciences \(DCPPS\)](#), **with faculty rank at the level of Assistant Professor or higher**. The DCPPS has five (5) departments; see '[How to Find a Mentor](#)' for hyperlinks to each department.
4. Additional co-mentors from other MD Anderson departments or institutions may be added, if appropriate and the mentor requirements have been met.

## How to Find a Mentor

Applicants who do not have confirmed MD Anderson faculty mentors may utilize any of the three (3) search methods below to contact faculty directly for discussions about mutual interests and securing their support as mentors, and ensure that the [requirements](#) are met:

1. Use [this list](#) to identify participating faculty. Faculty listed are not obligated to serve as mentors and may not be available.
2. Search for mentors within the five (5) departments of the [Division of Cancer Prevention and Population Sciences \(DCPPS\)](#) using the hyperlinks below:
  - 1) [Behavioral Science](#)
  - 2) [Health Disparities Research](#)
  - 3) [Clinical Cancer Prevention](#)
  - 4) [Epidemiology](#)
  - 5) [Health Services Research](#)
3. Use the [MD Anderson Faculty Search Engine](#) to locate additional MD Anderson faculty.

**NOTE:** To contact MD Anderson faculty, call 713-792-2121 or 1-800-889-2094, provide the faculty's name, request their direct number, and ask to be transferred. For assistance in identifying mentors, email Dr. Chang at [ShineChang@mdanderson.org](mailto:ShineChang@mdanderson.org) and CC Ms. Lewis at [KLLewis2@mdanderson.org](mailto:KLLewis2@mdanderson.org).

## Step 2: COMPLETE THE SLATE APPLICATION

1. Use [this link](#) (or copy and paste the shortened URL in your web browser: <https://bit.ly/SlateGordonPostdocApp>) to launch the **Postdoctoral Fellow Inquiry Form**.
2. The SLATE portion of the application process consists of **1) Disclosures, 2) Inquiry Form, 3) SLATE Account Creation, and 4) Application**.
3. **Disclosures**. After launching the inquiry form, expand each title at the top of the page and **read** each section (we recommend printing or screenshotting each section as they all contain pertinent information):
  - 1) **Please Read Before You Apply**,
  - 2) **Additional Documents Required If Selected As A Final Candidate**, and
  - 3) **Onboarding Contingencies That Require Early Action**.
4. Complete the **Inquiry Form** and complete the following:
  - 4.1 **Personal Information** (e.g., name, demographics, personal email).
  - 4.2 Doctoral Degree information
  - 4.3 **Publications**. Provide up to five of the most relevant and impactful manuscripts that have already been published. For each publication, you are required to enter: *1) authorship position, 2) publication type, 3) journal name, 4) publication title, 5) publication date, and 6) upload a pdf version of the publication*. To add another publication, click the 'add publication' button. **At least one publication is required to apply for a postdoctoral fellowship position.**
  - 4.4 **Upload Resume/CV**.
  - 4.5 **Provide your ORCID ID and eRA Commons ID**. If you don't have an ORCID visit <https://orcid.org/register>.
  - 4.6 **Statement of Research Experience and Interest (i.e., personal statement)**. We recommend that you draft your personal statement in MS Word and use the word count feature to ensure that you do not exceed the 700-word limit. Copy and paste your completed statement into the form field. References are not necessary. Your Statement **must address the following three (3) areas:**
    - 1) Your research interests, experience, and future goals in colorectal cancer prevention and control.
    - 2) Your reasons for seeking research training from this program. Please include any life experiences or motivating factors related to your career interest.
    - 3) How the fellowship will contribute to your future career plans in **colorectal** cancer prevention research.
  - 4.7 **Review and Submit**. Double-check all aforementioned items **before** clicking the SUBMIT button. **The Slate system will not accept revisions or revised documents.**
5. Create your **Slate Account**.
  - 5.1. After clicking the **SUBMIT** button, you will receive an email from **MD Anderson Education & Training ([trainee@mdanderson.org](mailto:trainee@mdanderson.org))**, **subject line: "Complete your Trainee Position Inquiry Request"**. Follow the instructions and click the hyperlink in the email to create a Slate account and request your letters of recommendation. **Please bookmark your SLATE application in your web browser and note your SLATE username and password.**
  - 5.2 **Letters of Recommendation**: In the **Recommendations** screen, enter the contact information for your recommender. Your recommender should be professors or faculty mentors who know you well. Please inform your referee that their letter must be:

- 1) on institutional letterhead,
- 2) signed, and
- 3) recently dated.

The recommender will receive an email notification from [trainee@mdanderson.org](mailto:trainee@mdanderson.org), **subject line: "Recommendation Request from YOUR NAME for MD Anderson Cancer Center"** and a **link** to upload the letter of recommendation to your account. You will receive an email when the letter has been successfully uploaded.

5.3 Upload a **copy** of the *Diploma of the doctoral degree* (include a certified translation if the degree is not in English).

5.4 (For graduating doctoral students only) Provide 1) **Proof of Enrollment in a Doctoral Degree Program AND 2) a Letter from the Doctoral Committee Chairperson/Advisor stating the anticipated date of degree completion** and confirming the doctoral program status is good. **Merge both files into a single pdf file before uploading to SLATE.**

## Step 3: COMPLETE THE SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATION

Merge all items below into a single pdf file and email it to [Apply@CancerPreventionTraining.org](mailto:Apply@CancerPreventionTraining.org) to complete your phase one application. **Download all forms noted below from [www.bit.ly/GordonPostdoc](http://www.bit.ly/GordonPostdoc).**

- 1) **(Download) Application Checklist & Coversheet** must be completed, dated, and placed on top.
- 2) **Letters of support from each prospective mentor** must be e-mailed directly from mentor or support staff to [apply@cancerpreventiontraining.org](mailto:apply@cancerpreventiontraining.org) with "Letter of Support for Jane Doe - CP RTP Gordon Postdoc Applicant" in the subject line.

**(Optional) Applicants may include copies of the mentor support letters in the supplemental application.**

### **Mentor support letter requirements:**

- Must be on letterhead.
  - Must be manually or electronically/digitally signed.
  - Must be dated within 90 days of application deadline.
  - Must briefly describe:
    - 1) relationship with other mentors (new or established),
    - 2) planned roles and schedule for mentoring,
    - 3) activities for developing or expanding collaborative research in cancer prevention and control,
    - 4) metrics or outcomes that indicate successful collaboration and mentoring,
    - 5) number of other trainees and their academic rank currently supervised, and
    - 6) successful past trainees, including recently launched.
- 3) **(Download) Mentor's Profile Form**
  - 4) **Mentor's NIH Biosketch** (from each mentor listed).
  - 5) **Mentor's Other Support** (from each mentor listed).
  - 6) A **Professional photograph (i.e., headshot photo)** with a neutral background will be included in the CP RTP postdoctoral roster, if you are selected.
  - 7) **(Download) Proposal Keywords, Title, and Suggested Reviewer Form** will help us solicit subject matter experts to review your research and career proposal, if you are selected.
  - 8) **(Download) Fellowship Requirements Memo (signed by applicant and primary mentor)**
  - 9) **(Download) Mentor Requirements Memo (signed by primary mentor)**

## Step 4: SUBMIT THE SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATION

1. Email all items on the APPLICATION CHECKLIST & COVERSHEET in **one single pdf** file by the application deadline to [Apply@CancerPreventionTraining.org](mailto:Apply@CancerPreventionTraining.org).
2. Both the *application file* and *subject line of the email* must have the format: **Last Name, First Name – CPRTP Gordon Application**.

Your application is complete when all four (4) steps are finished.

## Application Review Criteria

The [Advisory Committee](#) will review applications based on the following criteria.

1. **Relevance:** Are the career and research interests of the applicant clearly in **colorectal** cancer prevention? Is the proposed research project original and independent from the aims of a parent project? (Applications for research not relevant to cancer prevention, such as those focusing on cancer treatment, are not accepted.)
2. **Academic merit:** Does the applicant's past academic performance suggest future success? Do the letters of recommendation indicate the author's knowledge of the applicant's capabilities? Are there specific areas or skills that the applicant needs to strengthen to achieve career success?
3. **Promise and educational benefit to the applicant's career development:** Will the fellowship accelerate the applicant's career toward becoming an independent cancer prevention investigator? Does the applicant indicate strong commitment to a career in cancer prevention research? Does the applicant have the intellectual capabilities and work ethic to benefit from the fellowship?
4. Are the **sponsoring mentors** well-funded? Can they provide adequate staff and lab assistants, ensuring that the trainees can devote their time to scientific and career development? Do they describe a robust plan for collaborative research? Is there an integrated plan for mentoring? Given how many other trainees supervised, do mentors describe a plan to provide sufficient time for mentoring?

## Notice of Award

The CPRTP will e-mail all candidates the application decision on the '**Notice to Awardee**' date listed at <https://bit.ly/SlateGordonPostdocApp> > **Deadlines and Important Dates**.

## Research and Career Proposal

Fellowship awardees will be invited via email to submit their Research and Career Proposal, typically due four weeks after notification, and will receive separate onboarding instructions. Proposals outlining research, educational objectives, career development, and publication plans will be reviewed by the CPRTP Advisory Committee and subject matter experts, with revisions as needed.

## Reminders

- All Phase one documents, including letters of recommendation and mentor support are due by the deadline on our [web page](#).
- Visit [www.bit.ly/GordonPostdoc](http://www.bit.ly/GordonPostdoc) for *FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)*. If your answer is not in the FAQs, email [Apply@CancerPreventionTraining.org](mailto:Apply@CancerPreventionTraining.org).
- Awardees will receive **onboarding** instructions via MD Anderson's Slate system, including visa forms (if applicable), immunizations (current within one year), health documents, background checks, and drug testing. Request immunizations and documents promptly to avoid delays.

## CP RTP Contacts

Shine Chang, Ph.D., CP RTP Director  
Professor of Health Disparities Research  
(713) 563-3573  
[ShineChang@MDAnderson.org](mailto:ShineChang@MDAnderson.org)

Kava Lewis, M. A.  
CP RTP Program Manager  
(713) 563-9670  
[KLLewis2@MDAnderson.org](mailto:KLLewis2@MDAnderson.org)

## Mailing Address

The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center  
Cancer Prevention Research Training Program  
P.O. Box 301439  
Houston, Texas 77230

**Virtual Business Hours:** Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm Central Time

**Website:** [www.CancerPreventionTraining.org](http://www.CancerPreventionTraining.org)

**Email:** [Apply@CancerPreventionTraining.org](mailto:Apply@CancerPreventionTraining.org)